

Message Text

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45

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-15 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 AID-20 IGA-02

OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-11 DRC-01 /194 W

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R 081525Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1719

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 3335

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CM, IS

SUBJECT: CAMEROON-ISRAELI RELATIONS

1. DURING PRE-DINNER CONVERSATION OCT 6 WITH PRESIDENT AHIDJO AND AMBASSADOR, DAVID ROCKEFELLER EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT ZAIRE'S BREAKING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, TO WHICH PRESIDENT RESPONDED WITH TYPICAL NON-COMMITTAL SILENT NOD AND SHRUG OF SHOULDERS. ROCKEFELLER PURSUED SUBJECT WITH DIRECT QUESTION WHETHER CAMEROON INTENDED BREAK WITH ISRAEL. PRESIDENT ASSUMED CONTEMPLATIVE AIR, HESITATED A BIT AND THEN SLOWLY RESPONDED, "NO, NOT FOR THE TIME BEING (PAS POUR LE MOMENT)". AFTER ANOTHER STUDIED SILENCE, HE REPEATED WITH A SMILE, "NOT FOR THE TIME BEING".

2. PRESIDENT HAD JUST LEARNED OF OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES IN MIDDLE EAST BUT THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT THAT DEVELOPMENT INFLUENCED HIS COMMENT PARA 1. WHEN AMBASSADOR
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MENTIONED THAT UN RESOLUTION 242 REMAINED MOST BALANCED AND

REASONABLE BASIS FOR OVERALL SETTLEMENT ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, PRESIDENT OBSERVED ONLY THAT SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST HAD GONE ON TOO LONG AND THAT IT WAS POISONING OTHER RELATIONSHIPS.

3. IN CONVERSATION DURING PRESIDENTIAL DINNER FOR ROCKEFELLER, ASSISTANT SEC GEN AT PRESIDENCY SENGAT-KUO COMMENTED TO DCM THAT ZAIRE'S BREAK WITH ISRAEL WAS SOMEWHAT SURPRISING IN VIEW OF THEIR HITHERTO CLOSE RELATIONS AND COOPERATION; ON OTHER HAND, TREND AMONG THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES HAS BEEN STEADILY TOWARD INCREASING IDENTIFICATION WITH ARAB SIDE AND LOSS OF SYMPATHY TOWARD ISRAELI POSITION ON MIDDLE EAST QUESTION AS WITNESSED BY MOST RECENT OAU AND NON-ALIGNED SUMMITS.

4. ISRAELI AMBASSADOR YAARI TOLD US JUST PRIOR TO ZAIRE'S BREAK HE HAD NOT HAD ANY READOUT FROM GURC ON ALGIERS CONFERENCE, HAD NOT SEEN PRESIDENT SINCE CONFERENCE, WAS WAITING TO REVIEW SITUATION WITH FONMIN EFON WHEN LATTER RETURNED TO YAOUNDE. (EFON LEFT YAOUNDE FOR UNGA VIA "FEW DAYS" IN PARIS SEPT 21. OPENED NEGOTIATIONS FOR REVISING FRENCH-CAMEROONIAN COOPERATION AGREEMENTS SEPT 25, STAYED ON IN PARIS, AND RETURNED TO YAOUNDE OCT 7 WITHOUT HAVING GONE TO NEW YORK.) YAARI SEEMED TO BE TRYING HARD TO PROJECT RELAXED ATTITUDE ON PROSPECTS VIS-A-VIS BOTH ZAIRE AND CAMEROON. HE WAS NOT CONVINCING.

5. COMMENT. WE THINK PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERED RESPONSE TO ROCKEFELLER, REINFORCED BY SENGAT-KUO'S COMMENTS, PORTENDS GURC BREAK WITH ISRAEL SOONER RATHER THAN LATER (SUBJECT OF COURSE TO ANY SUBSTANTIALLY NEW SITUATION ARISING OUT OF CURRENT HOSTILITIES). EVEN WITHOUT THESE HIGHEST-LEVEL INDICATIONS, WE WOULD BE EXPECTING BREAK IN NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE NOW THAT ZAIRE HAS TAKEN THE STEP AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT MODERATES MAY SOON BE FOLLOWING. GURC'S RECORD ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CONTROVERSIES HAS BEEN RATHER CONSISTENT--WHILE NEVER IN ISOLATED COMPANY OF ONLY THE FAITHFUL BAND OF "PROGRESSIVES" (GUINEA, ALGERIA, TANZANIA, ETC.), CAMEROON SENSES TRENDS EARLY ON AND MANAGES TO STAY IN FOREFRONT OF MODERATES AS THEY SWING INTO LINE TOWARDS MORE MILITANT PUBLIC POSTURE. CAMEROON IS RECEIVING NO AID FROM

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ISRAEL AND HAS NOTHING CONCRETE TO LOSE BY JOINING GROWING RANKS OF OAU MEMBERS MANIFESTING SOLIDARITY WITH THEIR NORTH AFRICAN BROTHERS. AHIDJO HAS BEEN GROWING STEADILY MORE IMPATIENT WITH WHAT HE SEES AS ISRAELI HARD-HEADEDNESS ON PALESTINE ISSUE. GURC HAS NO REASON TO FIGHT THE TREND. IN SUM, IT FULLY IN CHARACTER AND THE TIMING IS ABOUT RIGHT FOR CAMEROON TO DECLARD ITSELF SOON.

6. DEPT. PASS TEL AVIV AS APPROPRIATE.
MOORE

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